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VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

The Honorable Jocelyn G. Boyd
Chief Clerk/Executive Director
Public Service Commission of South Carolina
101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100
Columbia, SC 29210

**Re: Public Service Commission of South Carolina – Administrative
and Procedural Matters
Docket Number: 2005-83-A**

Comments on Website Improvements

Dear Ms. Boyd:

I am filing this letter on behalf of Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC and Duke Energy Progress, LLC (together, the “Companies”) in response to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (the “Commission”) staff’s request for comments regarding improvements to the Commission’s website. The Companies intend to participate in the workshop scheduled for March 30, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. The Companies find the Commission’s website to be user-friendly and well organized and offer the following suggestions for Commission staff’s consideration.

On the tab titled “Consumer Info Page” of the Commission’s website, there is a link to a document titled “FAQs for Residential Electric Customers.” The Companies believe that South Carolina ratepayers would benefit from certain updates to this document as described below.

1. On page 2, the document includes the response to a frequently asked question (“FAQ”) that reads “Q. Why can’t I choose my bill due date?” The answer to this question correctly explains the utility billing cycle and why selecting a bill due date has been challenging in prior years. However, the Companies do offer AMI-metered customers the option to choose their bill due date through their Pick Your Due Date Program. This program allows customers to select the day they want their bill to be due each month. The Companies recommend the answer to this FAQ be updated to explain that some utilities do offer programs that allow customers to choose their own due dates, and that customers should contact their electric provider to determine eligibility.

2. On Page 6, the document includes the response to a FAQ that reads “Q. If I cannot pay my bill before the past due date, can I get an extension on the due date?” The response indicates that ratepayers should “contact Duke Energy to discuss options for payment arrangements at 1-800-777-9898.” However, the Companies believe it would be appropriate if ratepayers were directed to contact their electric provider rather than only Duke Energy. The response should instead list contact information for Duke Energy Carolinas, Duke Energy Progress, Dominion Energy South Carolina, and Santee Cooper.
3. On Pages 6-7, the document includes the response to a FAQ that reads “Q. Are there any other options available?” The response informs customers that the Equal Payment Program is available to customers to assist in removing seasonal variations in monthly bills. However, with the implementation of Customer Connect, the Companies no longer offer the Equal Payment Program to customers. All customers must now enroll in the equivalent Budget Billing Program, which offers both an annual and quarterly option for qualifying customers to choose from. The Companies believe the response to this FAQ should be updated to reflect the existing Budget Billing Program or should be more generalized in instructing customers to contact their electric providers given the evolving nature of customer programs that may be offered by utilities.
4. Any instance where customers are directed to contact a customer service number should be updated to provide the contact information for all electric utility providers. Duke Energy should be updated to Duke Energy Carolinas throughout, and the correct contact number is 1-800-777-9898. Progress Energy Carolinas should be updated to Duke Energy Progress throughout, and the contact number is 1-800-452-2777.
5. Several of the links contained within the document are no longer accessible, and many refer to “Progress Energy Carolinas,” which merged with Duke Energy to become Duke Energy Progress in 2012. The Companies recommend that any references to Progress Energy Carolinas be updated to Duke Energy Progress and that each of the links in the document be updated so customers are able to access current information. Although the Companies recommend the Commission review each of the links contained within the document, the Companies have included a list of the updates they believe should be made.
 - a. Page 3, Q. What can I do to try to lower my bill?
 - i. Duke Energy link does not connect to an existing webpage.
 - The Companies recommend this link be replaced with the following: Duke Energy Carolinas & Duke Energy Progress - <https://www.duke-energy.com/home/savings/lower-my-bill-toolkit>
 - b. Pages 6-7, Q. Are there any other options available?
 - i. Duke Energy and Progress Energy Carolinas links do not connect to existing webpages.
 - The Companies recommend this link be replaced with the following: Duke Energy Carolinas & Duke Energy Progress - <https://www.duke-energy.com/Home/Billing/Budget-Billing>

- c. Page 7, Q. Who can I contact to get help to pay my bill?
 - i. Progress Energy Carolinas link does not connect to an existing webpage.
 - The Companies recommend this link be replaced with the following:
Duke Energy Progress - <https://www.duke-energy.com/home/billing/special-assistance>
- d. Page 9, Q. Do the investor-owned electrical utilities offer residential time-of-use rates?
 - i. Duke Energy Carolinas & Progress Energy Carolinas links do not connect to existing webpages.
 - The Companies recommend this link be replaced with the following:
Duke Energy Carolinas & Duke Energy Progress - <https://www.duke-energy.com/Home/Billing/Rates>

In addition to the changes to the FAQs for Residential Electric Customers, the Companies also believe it would be beneficial for the Commission to update the page titled “Policies & Procedures” located on the Law and Guidelines tab of its website. This page houses the Commission’s instructions for practicing before the Commission, including an order reducing the required number of copies of testimony and exhibits that must be filed with the Commission, an order adopting a new procedure for complaints, and an order appointing standard hearing officers. However, multiple orders have been issued in the Commission’s Administrative Docket (Docket No. 2005-83-A) outlining the Commission’s expectations for how parties will practice before the Commission, including orders governing submission of allowable ex parte briefing requests, information required to be provided by parties for virtual hearings, and redaction of personal information from public filings, and a directive governing the Commission’s preferred method for identification of confidential information in filings. None of the recent orders and/or directives from the Administrative Docket have been added to the Policies & Procedures page of the Commission’s website, and the Companies believe it would be beneficial to parties who may be new to proceedings before the Commission or to new attorneys practicing before the Commission for administrative orders to be housed in one location. Because the page titled “Policies & Procedures” conveys to the public that the Commission’s policies can be found there, the Companies recommend the administrative orders issued in Docket No. 2005-83-A be added to this page. Alternatively, the Commission could include a link to that docket and note that additional policies and procedures of the Commission may be found there.

The Companies believe these changes to the Commission’s website will benefit South Carolina ratepayers and parties who practice before the Commission. The Companies appreciate the opportunity to submit comments and look forward to engaging with Commission staff and the other parties regarding updates to the Commission’s website.

Sincerely,



Katie M. Brown

cc: Parties of record